

MARCH 2006 WEATHER SUMMARY

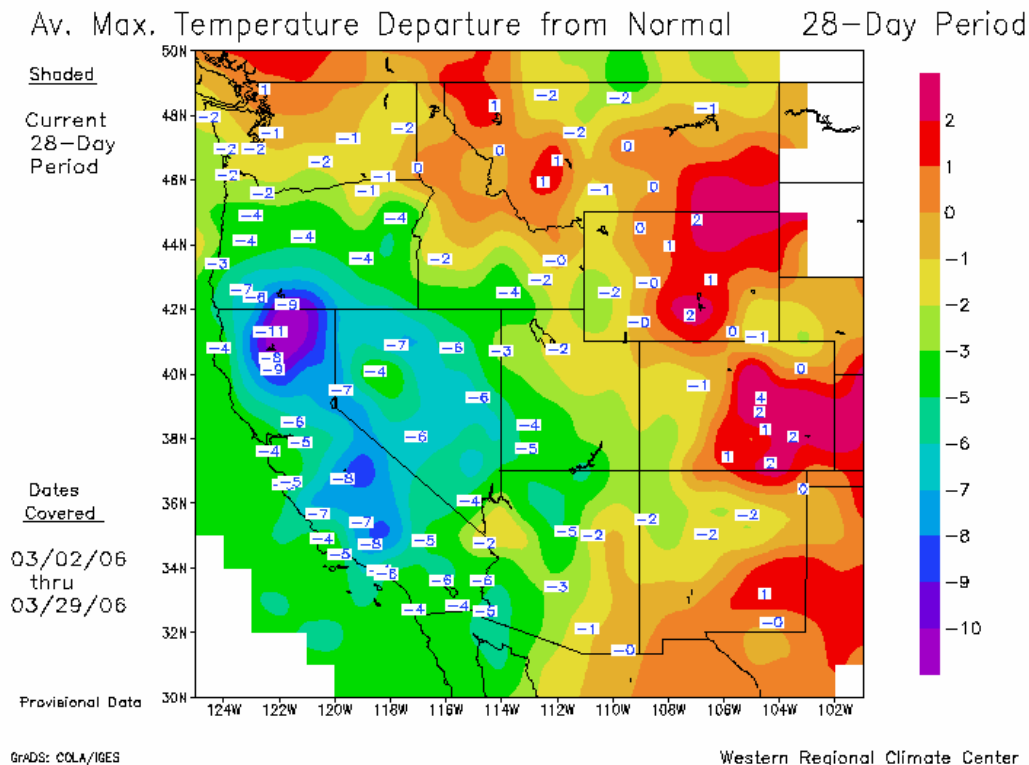
RIVERSIDE FIRE WEATHER CENTER

INTRODUCTION

For most of March, a series of Pacific upper troughs and surface low pressure areas brought below normal temperatures to all areas. However, a few weak ridges of high pressure brought above normal temperatures for a few short periods of time. The troughs and low pressure areas brought above normal precipitation to much of the area, but some areas of Southern California including much of the desert areas had below normal precipitation. Winds were mainly southerly with no strong offshore wind events during the month. This was a very unusual month in terms of the number of troughs that affected the region throughout the month, as well as how unusually cold most of the troughs were.

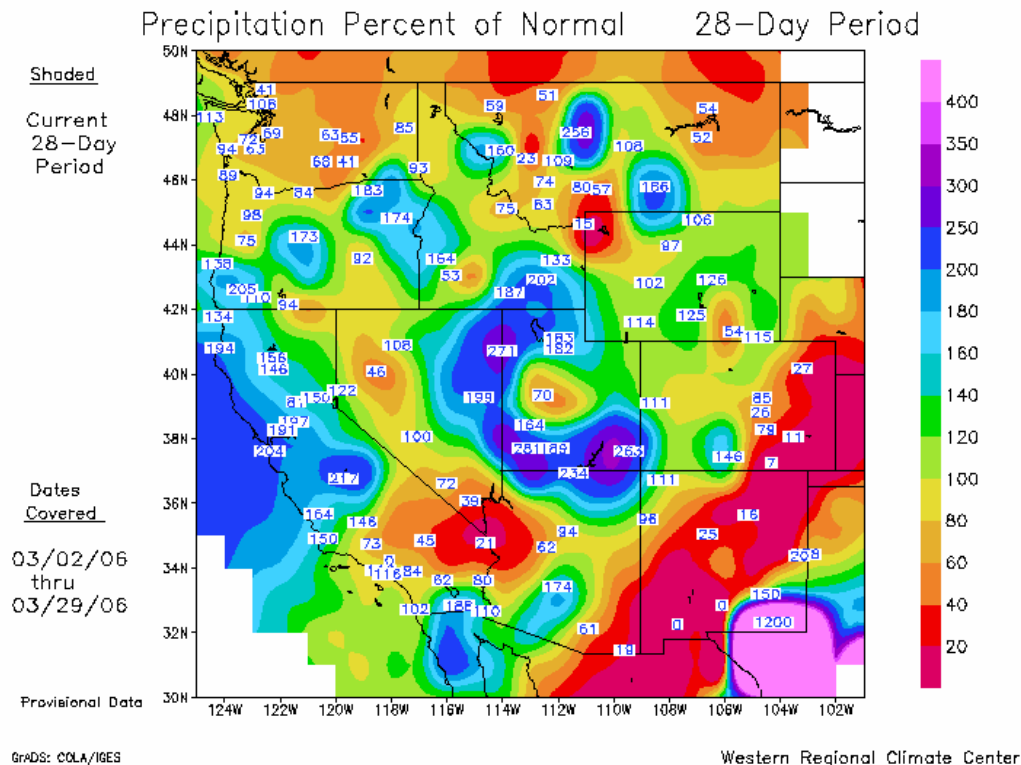
MAXIMUM TEMPERATURES

A series of Pacific upper troughs and surface low pressure areas produced below normal temperatures over the entire region for the month. However, a few weak ridges of high pressure brought above normal temperatures for a few short periods of time. Across Southern California, many valley locations had maximum temperatures in the 70s to mid 80s with the few ridges of high pressure that moved in. For much of the month, maximum temperatures were in the 50s and 60s, as the entire area was dominated by a series of cold Pacific troughs. Normally, the valley locations of Southern California are in the mid 60s to low 70s the whole month. For the month, maximum temperatures ranged from 8 degrees below normal over some Sierra locations to 2 degrees below normal over some eastern Desert locations. There were no record temperatures set at Riverside during the month.



PRECIPITATION

A series of Pacific troughs and surface low pressure areas moving through California brought periods of precipitation during the entire month of March. Most of the low pressure areas moved through the northern part of the state, so Central California received more precipitation than Southern California. Generally, areas of Central California received between 3 and 6 inches of rainfall and most locations over Southern California received between 1 and 3 inches of rainfall for the month. As typically is the case, much lower precipitation amounts were recorded over much of the desert areas. Most of the storms were quite cold with a snow level of 2,000 feet over Central California and 4,000 feet over Southern California. The storm at the end of the month was warm with the snow level above 8,000 feet. Several new feet of snow fell over the Sierra as well as the mountains of Southern California during the month. Riverside set a record daily rainfall on February 28th with 0.68 inches. Riverside received 1.79 inches of rainfall for the month, when normally they receive 2.19 inches.



WINDS

Winds were mostly southerly the entire month as Pacific troughs and surface low pressure areas moved through California. Southerly afternoon winds were mainly between 10 and 20 mph. However, as the stronger troughs moved onshore southerly winds over some mountain and desert locations were 15 to 30 mph with gusts in the 40s and 50s. There were no strong offshore wind events during the month.

CONCLUSION

March had below normal temperatures throughout the region. Precipitation was above normal over much of the area, except for some portion of Southern California, including much of the deserts, where below normal amounts occurred. Winds were mainly southerly the entire month, with no strong offshore wind events.

FIRES

No significant fire activity occurred this month due to generally wet fuels, below normal temperatures and above normal humidity.